

THE NORMATIVE CHARACTER OF CREATION ORDINANCES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Abstract:

It is acknowledged that our basic human rights must come from outside of man – man is born with them; and such rights are inherent, universal, normative, and interdependent. The best and only proper explanation for such rights is provided by the biblical worldview, and specifically by the story of creation in the first chapters of Genesis. Among other things, this foundational and constitutive narrative speaks to us of the sanctity of human life based on the *Imago Dei*, the sanctity of gender and of marriage based on the first pair of humans God created, and the sanctity of work and rest based on the pattern of the creation week. Human rights and responsibilities properly stem from and depend upon these creation principles or ordinances, and such principles are in place for as long as this creation endures. However, man's rebellion against these creation principles subverts the very rights man enjoys; and their interdependence warns us that they stand or fall together based on man's respect for these ordinances, including setting aside a day for worship and rest.

Key words: *human rights; creation; origins; creation principles; sanctity of human life; sanctity of gender; sanctity of marriage; day of rest.*

If human rights do exist, such as what appears to be the universally acclaimed *right to life*, where do such *rights* come from? As argued elsewhere, the best explanation and the one which accounts best for all the data is offered by the Judeo-Christian worldview, pointing us back to the creation of all things by a personal God.¹ Operating with a Christian world-

1 The United States' 1776 Declaration of Independence states it plainly yet profoundly: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness' (<https://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/>).

view leads one to conclude that a human right is not granted by society, by human governments, or by any official declaration,² but it is rather inherent to every human being (the universal character of human rights), given by the Creator Himself by virtue of creation; thus, society and human legal systems can only acknowledge such rights and protect them.

The inherent status of these rights and their universality in application clearly point to their normative character. If man arrives in this world already endowed with such rights, where do they come from? We instinctively know they are there, but how do we learn of them, and what makes them actually real and normative? The answer is found in the Genesis story of creation. This poetic narration of primordial events records and informs us of our origins, of how we were put together and designed to function both in relation to our Creator and in relation to His creation. Thus, the creation story itself becomes normative, being the authoritative witness of the formative or constitutive authority of the Creator to order creation in a certain way, to instill in it certain laws or principles, so that the created order is able to function properly for as long as He allows it to endure. This naturally implies that if such principles or rules are tampered with by someone other than the Creator, creation itself ceases to work properly. Thus, whenever man goes against these normative principles instilled in creation, confusion begins to set in the created order; and, besides being in a rebellious state against its Creator, sooner or later, man and creation become impaired, dysfunctional, and even self-destructive.

For a discussion on the reasonableness and superiority of the Christian worldview in explaining the basis of human rights see Daniel Istrate, „Vegetables, Conscience and the Christian Faith: What does religious liberty have to do with human dignity?” in *Journal for Freedom of Conscience* 7/2 / *Jurnalul Libertății de Conștiință* 7/2, Editura IARSIC: Les Arcs, France: 2019, pp. 496-509; also, Lee Strobel, *The Case for a Creator*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004; and many other resources, such as Nancy R. Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004.

2 The best known example is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, set forth by the United Nations in 1948. According to the The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the United Nations, „Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are *inherent* to us all, [and] range from the most fundamental - the right to life - to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty.” So, even the UN acknowledges the inherent nature of these rights. But on what basis could the UN make such affirmations? What makes them „rights”, and what could give them

When we speak of such rules or principles, also called creation ordinances,³ we refer not to impersonal physical laws ingrained in nature – such as the law of gravity, neither to man-made imaginary rights invented by moderns ideologies – such as the so-called „right to abortion”, but rather to those rules or principles that are based on creation itself, clearly stemming from the creation story in Genesis, and are principles which pertain to the identity of human beings and to their ability to relate to other beings. These principles, unless modified by the Creator Himself⁴, stand for as long as this creation endures. What are then some of the essential principles or rules ingrained in the created order according to the Genesis creation story, and how should their normative character shape our understanding of humanity and human rights and responsibilities in this twenty-first century? The most important ones pertain to life, worship, gender, marriage, roles, work and rest – all the essential areas of human existence. So, we may speak of the sanctity of human life, the sanctity of worship, the sanctity of human gender, the sanctity of marriage, the sanctity of gender-distinctive roles in life and family, and the sanctity of work and rest.

One important aspect of these creation ordinances (and of the rights based on them) is their interdependence: stemming from the mind of the One Creator to order a unified system, each of these principles' proper or improper operation affects the others. Thus, it is useless to speak of one's freedom of religion – stemming from the sanctity of worship, if we deny him the right to life, which stems from the sanctity of human life; or, we cannot say that one has freedom of speech if he is denied his right

characteristics such as *universal* and *inherent*? Had they been real before the UN's declaration of 1948? If they had – since they are *inherent* to every human being of all times and places, then humans arrive in this world already carrying such rights; but from where?... It appears that secular man takes for granted the rights with which the Creator has endowed him, without crediting or acknowledging the Giver.

3 See John Murray's very important work on this topic: *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1957.

4 An example of a creation rule that was later modified is man's diet. Initially, man was told to eat only fruits and vegetables (Gen 1:29). After the flood, God allowed man to add meat to his diet (Gen 9:3-4). Then, in the Old Testament law for Israel, God restricted the consumption of some foods, and differentiated between clean and unclean (Lev 11:1-47 și Deut 14:3-21). However, with the coming of Jesus and the New Covenant (Mar 7:19), such restrictions were lifted, man functioning again under the Genesis 9 guidelines and mandate.

to be free. So, it must be realized that the principles whereby God has ordered creation must go together; and tampering with one soon leads to the others being negatively affected. Further, as they all stem from the same Creator, once human agency tampers with one ordinance, it does not stop there: tampering with the others is never far behind. Why? Because tampering with any principle or ordinance God has placed in creation reflects an attitude of autonomy and rebellion on the part of man against God, an attitude which soon enough extends, challenges, and rejects the other ordinances.

So, our goal here is to point out how the creation ordinances of Genesis 1-2 serve as the proper foundation for our human rights, and to provide a summary discussion and analysis of such rights from the point of view of their normativity, some responsibilities they imply, as well as their interdependence with the others.

One of the cornerstone texts in this discussion is Genesis 1:26-28, "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." It is because of our origin as God's special creation, made after His image and likeness – both male and female – that each human being has dignity and worth. It is only because life comes from God that it is sacred – thus the sanctity of human life, from conception to natural death. It is only because God created male and female that makes the binary gender distinction normative. And it is because of the male and female initial creation and union as intended by the Creator that marriage is sacred, such union normatively involving one biological man and one biological woman.

The beginning of Genesis 2 teaches us about another norm of creation: a day of rest, or the principle of six-plus-one, whereby the Creator established a normative pattern for mankind, teaching us by example to work six days, yet the seventh to set aside for worship and rest: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the

seventh day from all his work that he had done.³ So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.” Later on we also find the pattern for more specific roles established by God for the man and the woman, with the man being charged to work and keep the garden, and the woman being created as a helpmeet and a homemaker, the one who bears children and thus contributes together with her husband to the mandate of Gen 1:28 to grow and multiply and fill the earth.

Switching our focus now to the contemporary culture we could notice more and more moral confusion and deep darkness setting in. It is not that confusion did not exist before the beginning of the third decade of the twenty-first century, for it has been with us ever since Eve, in an expression of autonomy and rebellion against God, ate and gave of the forbidden fruit to Adam; the seeds of dysfunction and even self-destructiveness have been sown, and their fruit has not failed to appear. Yet, at least since the coming of Christ, such fruit has been more isolated and limited in the world, especially since the spread and domination of Christianity especially in Europe and then in the Americas. However, the fruit of confusion and dysfunction coupled with the growing seeds of self-destruction is growing on a wider scale where once Christianity flourished. Why has there been such a change, especially in the last six or seven decades?

Perhaps competing explanations could be given, and a multi-faceted approach would probably be preferred by most people. Yet, we submit that the basic issue driving this change or dramatic shift in Western culture has to do with the hard effort to overthrow the yoke and restraints that creation ordinances have placed on society, together with an overthrow of their Author (cf. Ps 2:3). Man has become the measure of all things now, and the modern “self” has come to triumph.⁵ Human rights, though emphasized more than ever, because they have been divorced from their solid foundation in creation and creation principles, have begun to be eroded where one would expect it the least: in Western industrialized democracies that had championed such rights.

For example, the right to life is the most basic of all human rights, built on the creation ordinance of the sanctity of human life: we must protect and

5 See Carl R. Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020.

nourish all human beings, from conception to natural death because man has been created in the image and likeness of God. Yet modern industrialized nations have managed to a large extent to outlaw the death penalty for capital crimes, yet have legalized and championed the killing of untold millions of unborn human beings every year. Do those babies not have the *right to life*? Apparently not, if it conflicts with a woman's newly invented "right to choose" what she does with "her own body" for the sake of convenience or other reasons; not to mention the hypocritical propaganda that the new life formed at conception within her womb (most often with her willful participation) is somehow part of her body of which she can choose to dispose, and not an individual human being entitled to similar rights as the mother or the father who dictate the death of the baby. Such parents and larger families, instead of assuming the responsibilities to protect and nurture the new life that has been created, often, for frivolous reasons that are justifiable perhaps in their own eyes, choose to usurp the place of the Creator and pronounce the death sentence on the inconvenient human being in the womb. And this usurpation manifests itself also when it comes to end-of-life decisions, some choosing to play God in deciding when and how to end their life. This essential gift given by the Creator – the gift of life – is something He grants and He takes away; we should cherish it the whole time in between, and never go against the sanctity of human life normative.

Another very important human right has to do with one's liberty to exercise or practice one's religion; this right stems from the sanctity of worship: man was made to be in covenant and communion with God, a representative of the Creator on earth, to manage and administer creation on His behalf and in submission to Him. Thus, man is a religious or a worshiping creature by nature and design. He owes his allegiance to the One true God, and the normative character of the creation story teaches that man is responsible to submit to God's Word and worship Him. However, due to sin, man directs his worship elsewhere, to false gods, including himself, his own interests, desires, and dictates. And, even though God made and desires man to worship Him, He does not force people, but rather expects and invites them to do so; this is the foundation for freedom of religion, as well as for freedom of conscience.⁶

6 See Daniel Istrate, "Integrity and freedom of conscience in the Hebrew Bible: Job, and the price of integrity" in *Jurnalul Libertății de Conștiință* (*Journal for Freedom of Conscience*)

What is the relationship between the right to worship according to one's conscience and one's right to life? Man's rejection of certain aspects of the sanctity of human life creation mandate introduces confusion and fuels the rebellion. Instead of bowing before the Creator and worshiping Him in obedience, man worship other gods, himself, and his desires. In his idolatry, man bows down before the gods of pleasure, convenience, fear of man, autonomy, material gain, or any number of other idols; and, in the process, man sacrifices either the life of "unwanted" unborn babies or that of incapacitated elderly. Man will worship, and is free to do so, a freedom granted to him by God by virtue of creation – man's religious nature is unalterable; yet he is invited to worship the true God, for the alternative involves death, sooner or later.

The creation story also defines and makes normative the two genders: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27). Ever since the first pair of humans and their children, gender has been sacred, acknowledged as assigned by divine appointment at birth, and identical with one's biological sex. The practice of gender-reassignment surgeries based on one's inner confusion or gender dysphoria is one of the highest marks in today's man's rejection both of the created order and of the Authority behind it. It is true that in very rare cases, as the consequences of sin have amplified throughout generations, some people's biological gender based on their genitalia is ambiguous at birth, yet those intersex cases represent the very few exceptions in a fallen world; the normative character of the two biological genders stands for as long as this creation endures. And, from this creation ordinance stems not someone's "right to choose their preferred gender" – that has already been chosen or determined by the Creator, but rather the right to be accepted and respected as the man and woman they were biologically created to be, together with each one's responsibility to embrace and live out as part of the gender assigned by creation. Feelings of gender dysphoria (except for the clear intersex cases) must be recognized as manifestations of the confusion and dysfunction brought about by sin, generally of a spiritual dimension, and part of man's struggle in his tendency to stand against the order and normativity instilled in creation in the beginning. The phenomenon of gender dysphoria has exploded re-

cently in post-Christian societies where the Creator has been pushed out of the equation of life, existence and meaning; the “self” has become the determiner of truth, and expressive individualism or one’s inner feelings are now the norm, while self-fulfillment or self-realization is the ultimate goal. With such “standards” in place it is no wonder we now have lists not of three or four or twelve genders, but of one hundred and twelve, and the number is expected to climb.⁷ Nowadays it’s no longer sufficient to take a look at the person or at someone’s name to know whether you are dealing with a male or a female (as it has been and should be the norm); it now takes an expert with a PhD in clinical psychology to be able to properly identify someone’s gender!⁸ To this, one could hear the kind but firm voice of our Maker: “but from the beginning it was not so” (Matt 19:8), the context clearly implying that the norm was established in the beginning, as He states elsewhere, “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female’” (Mark 10:6).

Is one’s understanding of gender going to affect his understanding of other creation ordinances? It cannot be otherwise; confusion on the definition of gender and the rejection of this creation ordinance increases confusion exponentially especially when it comes to gender specific roles and a proper understanding of marriage, to which we now turn.

According to Gen 1:28, the Creator gave both the man and the woman this mandate: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the

7 The view advocated here is now called in ‘educated’ circles *cisnormativity*, meaning that a person’s gender aligns with the sex or gender one was assigned at birth. Once the flood-gates have been opened and people have been invited to define gender as something other than the norm, based on how one feels about and how he expresses himself, the numbers of so-called “genders” have been climbing steadily from two to three, to four, to sixty four, and to one hundred and twelve according to the author of this blog: <https://dudeasks.com/how-many-genders-are-there-in-2021/>. But he also states that this is only a current list of genders; further, he enumerates a few dozen prefixes and suffixes, encouraging people to make up their own gender: “Feel free to mix and match your own prefixes and suffixes to create the orientation that best describes you.” Another article makes it clear that we need to re-learn a whole new vocabulary, change pronouns, redefine words... just to be able to understand and not offend someone in this ultra-sensitive area of gender identification: Mere Abrams, “64 Terms that describe gender identity and Expression,” <https://www.healthline.com/health/different-genders> (Accessed 09/25/2021).

8 See Perri O. Blumberg, “A Comprehensive Gender Identity List, as Defined by Experts,” <https://www.womenshealthmag.com/relationships/a36395721/gender-identity-list/> (Accessed on 09/27/2021).

heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” The story that follows gives us the more specific gender roles God set out for man and woman: the man was placed in the garden “to work it and to keep it” (Gen 2:15), being also made responsible to lead the family in keeping the covenant (Adam is the one who directly receives the command about not eating from the forbidden tree, cf. vv.16-17). The woman is created as a helpmeet for Adam – a companion and a homemaker, the one who bears children and thus contributes together with her husband to the mandate of Gen 1:28 to grow, multiply and fill the earth.

Also, Gen 1:28 presupposes marriage, which becomes more explicit with the more detailed description of the special creation of Eve described in the next chapter. As the cornerstone institution for society for millennia, marriage has been respected and cherished, even if perverted at times and in places. The spread of Christianity with its high view of women and marriage has brought much needed correction to the status and treatment of women in many places around the world. The purpose of marriage taught by the creation story is at least tripartite: companionship, which implies intimate communication, togetherness in fulfilling the mission of the family (woman as a helpmeet), and reproduction. The creation story lends its normative character to the marriage model, defining marriage as the union between a biological man and a biological woman united for life with God’s blessing to fulfill His mission for the family. However, soon into the human story, polygamy came on the scene, then divorce, as well as other forms of abuse, violence, and disregard for the normative marriage model. Jesus corrected this, pointing His contemporaries back to ‘the beginning’ a number of times: “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’⁷ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife,⁸ and the two shall become one flesh.’ So, they are no longer two but one flesh.⁹ What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate” (Mark 10:6-9).

The assault on each of the creation ordinances discussed thus far has been fierce, especially during the last few decades. But the attacks have come mostly from secular circles or from liberal Protestants who have renounced the essence of the apostolic faith a long time ago. Yet there is another creation ordinance that stands or falls together with the others, and the attack on this one has come also from misguided evangelicals. This last creation ordinance has to do with the principle of six-plus-one, the

ordinance of work and rest, and specifically with setting aside one day out of seven for worship and physical rest. The norm is set out in Gen 2:1-3, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.² And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.³ So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation" (Gen 2:1-3).

Evangelicals who discard this principle usually claim that (1) there was no Sabbath observance before Israel came out of Egypt, and usually before the Law was given at Sinai – therefore, it is a Law article, from which Christians are free; and (2) not only does the New Testament not renew the fourth commandment in specific terms (while renewing all the other nine), but it is claimed that passages like Rom 14:5 and Col 2:16-17 or Hebrews 4 actually abrogate Sabbath observance or the observance of any day; therefore, they conclude that there is no biblical basis for Christians to set aside Sunday as special.

Does the first argument stand closer scrutiny? Since there is no specific mention of the Sabbath between Genesis 2 and Exodus 16, are we free to conclude that the Sabbath was implemented for the first time only after the Hebrews came out of Egypt, some millennia after creation (by a conservative account of biblical chronology)? First, this is an argument from silence. Second, the Sabbath principle, as pointed by Kevin DeYoung, "was not invented by Moses after the exodus,"⁹ for it was there from the creation of the world. Third, this six-plus-one pattern is mentioned before the Law was given, before the Hebrew people even reached Sinai (Exodus 16); and the narrative with the gathering of the manna implies that the people were aware of the Sabbath principle even before that time. And fourth, the use of the word "Remember" to introduce and incorporate this creation ordinance into the Decalogue strengthens the view that the people were aware of the special character of the seventh day, and not just something God came up with between Elim and Sinai; the expression "Remember the Sabbath day" implies a previous and longer knowledge of this rule, which they should now take seriously and act upon it.¹⁰ And, fifth, the fact that the fourth commandment is squarely based on the six-plus-one pattern of

9 Kevin DeYoung, *The 10 Commandments: What They Mean, Why They Matter, and Why We Should Obey Them*, Wheaton IL: Crossway, 2018, p.66.

10 *Ibidem*, p.67.

creation points to a general awareness of creation before the time of Moses, which is only to be expected.

Was not Adam there, when God pronounced a special blessing on the seventh day? Would he not ask and be instructed as to its meaning? Very hard to imagine otherwise. But Adam was a contemporary of Methuselah, overlapping for almost 250 years; Methuselah was a contemporary of Noah, overlapping for almost 600 years; Noah's son Shem, lived for almost 450 together with Noah, and Shem outlived Abraham, dying only after Isaac passed the age of 100. In a highly oral environment, would not the creation story – including the special role of the seventh day – be passed on from father to son, from Adam to Seth to Methuselah to Noah to Shem, ...? The fact that the Lord made it such an important component of His relationship with Israel has to do with the deliverance from the bitter slavery they had endured in Egypt (slaves were surely not asked if they would have liked a day to worship and rest); with that deliverance in the background, the Lord God now begins to order and re-create a people unto Himself, giving them the freedom to celebrate and have time to rest and worship, just as God had ordained at creation.

Was it necessary for this ordinance to be mentioned between Genesis 2 and Exodus 16 for it to have been in place during that time? Not really. Do we need to mention the law of gravitation for it to be valid? Is there any mention in the same passages of the ordinance on marriage as the union of a man and a woman for life, a rule instilled by God in creation? There is not. And when Lamech takes two wives, the reader instinctively knows that to be wrong, being a form of rebellion against the rule God had established for marriage. Is there any discussion on the normativity of the two genders after the creation story? Ever since creation till very recently man has instinctively known that God created two genders defined biologically and that He united them in marriage, where each one has a distinct role. Perversions of the norm have been around since the book of Genesis, yet creation principles are assumed; they are similar to the law of gravitation, or other laws God set in His creation for it to work properly. But, given the interconnectedness and interdependence of the creation principles, and given the way sin works and infects every aspect of life, just like fallen man trespassed the sanctity of human life (Cain killing Abel), rejected the sanctity of marriage (Lamech marrying two women), and openly defied the sanctity of gender and the creation mandate (the openly homosexual rela-

tionships at Sodom), it probably did not take long for people to also show their rebellion against their Creator by going against the sanctity of work and rest, and by defying any restrictions they felt such a day may place on the exercise of their pursuits.

By the same token, why should such a basic law be specifically renewed in the New Testament, if it is a creation ordinance? It does not have to be explicitly stated for it to maintain its normative character. Creation functions properly for as long as its constitutive principles are obeyed; so, as long as this creation endures, the six-plus-one principle remains in place, just like there are only two human genders, just like marriage is defined by the union between a biological man and a biological woman, and just like human life is sacred from conception till natural death. These ordinances are made normative by God through His creative activity.

But doesn't Paul say that all days are alike (Rom 14:5)? Yes, but this does not recuse man (and did not recuse Paul) from setting a day aside for worship and rest, as made normative by the creation order. Could man set apart any day for rest? Yes, but he cannot set apart any day for worship; the resurrection of Christ, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the apostolic and the early church practice, and foreshadowings from the Old Testament – these all make Sunday the appointed day for worship under the New Covenant.¹¹ If we claim the Bible is our final authority for belief and practice, we cannot and should not discard the biblical basis for worship on the Lord's Day; if one does that, then why gather once a week? Why not every day? Why not on Thursday? Or why not only at full moon, or once a year?

Some point to Col 2:16-17 as a proof for dismissing the biblical basis for this rule under the new covenant. Yet, there Paul is arguing against the legalism of keeping the Jewish Sabbaths, not against the Sabbath principle based on creation. Another passage is Hebrews 4 – it is argued that our rest is the reality of salvation, as we rest in Christ who accomplished everything necessary for us to be accepted by the Father; therefore, the Sabbath was fulfilled in Christ, and there is no longer a need for an actual day of rest. However, while it is true that our rest is ultimately found in Christ and His salvation, the author of Hebrews here speaks of salvation as

11 For a more detailed discussion on this, including some responsibilities we all have in light of it, see Daniel Istrate, „Leviticul 23 și Adunările Sfinte: Ce Sărbători au Creștinii?“, *Timotheus*, Vol. 3, Nr. 2, 2016, pp.157-168.

another rest – not that salvation replaces a day of rest, but that it is *like* that rest, although much more superior and desirable. But the clarification comes from understanding the two-sided reality in which we find ourselves: we are at the same time part of the initial (first, or old) creation, and of the new creation through faith in Christ – the famous “already and not-yet” discussion regarding the kingdom of God. At conversion we entered God’s kingdom, so are already in it; but we are not yet fully enjoying its reality and benefits, and this tension continues for as long as this old creation persists. So, the rest we enjoy in the reality of salvation does not replace the need for rest and worship, just as those who are saved still need to sleep; for, even though we have entered the rest of salvation through Christ, for as long as we are part of this old creation we need a special time / day set aside for rest and worship. And this truth shall stand for as long as this first (and old) creation endures, until the new creation comes into its own and displaces the old.¹²

The foundation of all human rights is not the United Nations’s declaration of such rights, but rather transcends us, being firmly established and dependent upon the creation principles instilled by the Creator in the beginning. Blessed is the people who acknowledges the normative character of these universal and interdependent ordinances, and who lives by them, in submission to the One who has gifted us with them for our good. Let the reader understand!

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12 On these aspects see also Edmund P. Clowney, *How Jesus Transforms the Ten Commandments*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2007, pp. 59-61; John Murray, *Principles of Conduct*, 30ff.; and Paul K. Jewett, *The Lord’s Day: A Theological Guide to the Christian Day of Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971). For a consideration of the evangelical view critiqued here, see D. A. Carson, ed., *From Sabbath to Lord’s Day*, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1999.

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